

THE ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health for the Rural District of Blandford,

FOR THE YEAR 1937.

To the Chairman and Members of the Blandford Rural District Council.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my Annual Report for the year 1937.

1.—GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area (acres)	.....	.....	.....	.....	61717
Population (estimated 1937)	.....	.....	.....	.....	7328
Number of Inhabited Houses (1937) according to Rate Book	.....	.....	.....	.....	2310
Rateable Value at 1st October, 1937	.....	.....	.....	.....	£26764
Sum represented by a penny rate	.....	.....	.....	.....	£117

2.—EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR.

		Total	Male	Female	
Live Births	Legitimate	90	47	43	
	Illegitimate	6	2	4	
Birth Rate per 1000 of estimated resident population					13.10
		Total	Male	Female	
Stillbirths	.....	3	1	2	
Rate per 1000 total births					31.25

The birth rate for 1937 was low. The average rate in this district for the last 15 years was 15.7 and the rate for England and Wales during 1937 was 14.9.

	Total	Male	Female
Deaths	93	48	45
Death Rate per 1000 of estimated resident population			12.69

This figure is satisfactory when compared with the rate for England and Wales during 1937, viz : 12.4 and the average rate in this district for the last 15 years, viz : 13.5.

The maternal mortality was nil, there being no deaths from puerperal causes.

The principal causes of death were heart diseases 24, cancer 13 and cerebral hæmorrhage 7, these three diseases of advanced life accounting for nearly half the total deaths.

Death Rate of infants under 1 year of age	
All infants per 1000 live births	20.83
Legitimate infants per 1000 legitimate live births	22.22
Illegitimate infants per 1000 illegitimate live births	0.0
Deaths from Measles	0
Whooping Cough	0
Diarrhoea under 2 years of age	0

3.—NOTIFIABLE AND INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

There were no serious epidemics and the District was very free from infectious diseases. The number of cases of scarlet fever was unusually small. Mumps and whooping cough were prevalent in the autumn.

An outbreak of food poisoning, traced to corned beef, occurred in and around Blandford in August. I have made a special report on this to the Council and need not give details here.

The two tables below give details of the notifiable diseases including tuberculosis.

One case of enteric fever was notified but the diagnosis was later changed and the notification cancelled.

Disease.	Total Cases Notified.	Cases admitted to Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Smallpox	0	0	0
Scarlet Fever	6	5	0
Diphtheria	1	1	0
Enteric Fever (including Paratyphoid)	0	0	0
Puerperal Fever	0	0	0
Puerperal Pyrexia	1	0	0
Pneumonia	14	4	2
Encephalitis Lethargica	1	1	1
Erysipelas	0	0	0
Acute Poliomyelitis	0	0	0

OPHTHALMIA NEONATORUM.—No cases occurred.

TUBERCULOSIS.

Age periods.	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Pulmonary		Non-pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-pulmonary	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0	0	0	0	0				
1	0	0	0	0				
5	0	0	0	0				
10	0	0	1	0				
15	0	0	1	1				
20	1	0	0	0	1	2	0	0
25	0	1	0	0				
35	0	0	0	0				
45	0	1	0	0				
55	0	1	0	0				
65 and upwards	0	0	0	0				
Totals	1	3	2	1	1	2	0	0

No non-notified deaths from tuberculosis occurred.

PUBLIC HEALTH (Prevention of Tuberculosis) REGULATIONS 1925.

No action was required under these regulations relating to tuberculosis employees in the milk trade.

No action was required under Section 62 of the Public Health Act, 1925. to procure the compulsory removal of cases to hospital.

DISINFECTION.

There is a steam disinfecter at the Isolation Hospital which is freely used. All houses in which infectious disease has been notified, have been disinfected. Verminous persons and their belongings when necessary are sent to the Isolation Hospital to be cleansed and disinfected.

Immunisation against diphtheria. No scheme for this has been adopted.

4.—HEALTH SERVICES OF THE DISTRICT.**HOSPITALS.**

The Blandford Cottage Hospital with 12 beds, provides general medical and surgical treatment for most cases requiring admission to hospital. The number of patients admitted during the year was 229 and 265 out-patients were treated. These are the highest figures so far recorded.

The Isolation Hospital with 24 beds has done good work during the year, 9 patients were admitted from the district, and 35 from other districts, viz :—

1 from Blandford Town, 14 from Shaftesbury Rural, 19 from Shaftesbury Borough and 1 from Sturminster Rural District.

The diseases treated were :—

Scarlet fever	.....	39 cases
Diphtheria	.....	1 case
Enteric fever	.....	1 „
Chicken pox	.....	1 „
German measles	.....	1 „
Whooping cough	.....	1 „

Two motor ambulances are available in Blandford, one for infectious and the other for non-infectious cases.

Arrangements have been made with Shaftesbury to send cases of small-pox, should they occur, to Foyle Hill Isolation Hospital.

CLINICS.

The Blandford Child Welfare Centre meets twice a month and a number of mothers bring their children to it from the Rural District. There were 664 attendances during 1937 and 122 babies attended.

The attendance at the Antenatal Clinic declined somewhat. An unusually low birth rate, both in the Town and Rural District, partly accounted for this, but mothers from the villages are not making as much use of this Clinic as they might do.

23 mothers attended during the year and there were 39 attendances.

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF.

The council employs a part time Medical Officer of Health, who holds the Diploma of Public Health of Oxford University, and a whole time Sanitary Inspector and Surveyor.

NURSING ARRANGEMENTS.

The County Nursing Association provides six District Nurses who are also Midwives and Health Visitors. Their salaries are paid largely from local subscriptions and partly by grants from the County Council and Ministry of Health.

A nurse has also been appointed by the County Council as Health Visitor for Blandford Town and Rural District.

CHEMICAL WORK.

Specimens are sent away when laboratory examinations are needed, usually to the Clinical Research Institute.

5.—SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT.

WATER.

There was no shortage of water during 1937. The greater part of the district is dependent on wells, which tap the supplies contained in the chalk formation and give water of good quality. In a small part of the district, where the subsoil is greensand, wells are not so satisfactory a supply.

There are at present five piped water supplies in the District, viz :— The Blandford Water Company's works, which supply some of the villages near the Town, and four smaller works supplying Bryanston, Durweston, Hilton, Milton Abbas,

Stickland, and parts of Milborne and Whitechurch. A new piped supply for Shroton is almost completed and the Blandford Water Company have extended their supply during the year to Spetisbury.

There are 11 Parishes with piped supplies and 20 without.

Analyses of water supplies.

The Blandford Water Company have hitherto only had a yearly chemical analysis made, which has always given good results. Recently they have had bacteriological analyses made with equally good results. For greater security they intend in future to have one chemical examination and two bacteriological made every quarter.

The Portman Estate works, which supply Bryanston and Durweston, have also had a regular yearly chemical and bacteriological analysis made. Last autumn, for the first time, the report was unsatisfactory, bacillus coli being found in the water. Careful inspection of the water works and source of supply disclosed no defect with the exception that the well which is the source is in a meadow and though properly covered was surrounded with the excreta of cattle. This seemed to be the probable source of the bacillus coli. The well has now been fenced. Several further analyses have been made and the last sample gave a perfectly good report.

The owners of the other small piped supplies have no regular analyses made of their water. They will be advised to do so.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

A few minor defects in drains were brought to notice and remedied.

RIVERS AND STREAMS.

No complaints of pollution have been made.

SCHOOLS.

The sanitary condition of most of these is satisfactory. No serious defects have come to notice during the year.

6.—INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

SALE OF FOOD AND DRUGS ACT.

Samples of the following articles were taken and analysed by the public analyst. None of them was found to be adulterated—

Butter, Chocolate biscuits, Flour, Grape fruit (tinned), Milk (7 samples), Margarine, Ovaltine, Pickles and Vinegar.

MILK SUPPLY.

Cowsheds and Dairies are inspected by the M.O.H. and Sanitary Inspector. Some defects were found and most of them have been remedied. The standard of cleanliness is improving.

There is one Pasteurising plant in the District, viz :—that of Bladen Dairies Ltd. No samples of their milk have been taken by this Local Authority for the Phosphatase test.

7.—FACTORIES. WORKSHOPS AND WORK PLACES.

18 Inspections of Workshops and Workplaces were made during 1937 and no defects requiring special action were found.

8.—HOUSING.

(a) HOUSING CONDITIONS.

While the general standard of housing is good there are in most parishes old houses which need constant vigilance to see that they are kept in repair.

In a few villages there are collections of old and unsatisfactory houses which need clearing away with building schemes to replace them.

Such schemes are developing in Milborne St. Andrew, Farnham, Winterbourne Kingston and Stourpaine. A scheme at Whitechurch is almost completed.

Other villages which will possibly need new building are Stickland, Houghton and Tarrant Monkton.

Overcrowding seldom occurs. Only three cases needed attention during 1937.

(b) HOUSING STATISTICS.

Number of New Houses erected during the year :

(a) Total, including numbers given separately under (b)	13
(i) By the Local Authority	0
(ii) By other Local Authorities	0
(iii) By other bodies and persons	13
(b) With State assistance under the Housing Acts	0

Approximate number of working class houses in the district 1892

1. Inspection of Dwelling Houses during the Year :—

(1) (a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	170
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	211
(2) * (a) Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925	148
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	189
(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	29
(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	48

2. Remedy of Defects during the Year without Service of formal Notices :—

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	15
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3. Action under Statutory Powers during the Year :—

(a) Proceedings under sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936	
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	0
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :	
(a) By owners	0
(b) By local authority in default of owners	0
(b) Proceedings under Public Health Acts :—	
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	0
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices ;	
(a) By owners	0
(b) By local authority in default of owners	0
(c) Proceedings under sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936	
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	0
(2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	0
(d) Proceedings under section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936	0
Number of houses owned by the Local Authority and held under	
Part III. of Housing Act, 1925	20
Part II. of ditto	0
Other Powers	18

4. Housing Act, 1936. Overcrowding.

(a) (i) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year	1
(ii) Number of families dwelling therein	2
(iii) Number of persons dwelling therein	9
(b) Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year	2
(c) (i) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year	1
(ii) Number of persons concerned in such cases	5
(d) Particulars of any cases in which houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for abatement	0

9.—SANITARY INSPECTIONS.

SANITARY INSPECTIONS.

Number of Inspections	177		
Number of informal notices	29	Number complied with	15
Number of statutory notices	0	“ “ “	0

COWSHEDS AND DAIRIES.

Number of persons on register at end of 1937	.....	.....	163
Number of dairy farms and other dairy premises on register at end of 1937	.....	.....	174
Number of dairy farms inspected during 1937	.....	.....	76
Number of Inspections during 1937	.....	.....	82
Number of notices served	0	Number complied with	0
Number of milkshops inspected during 1937	2	Number of inspections	3
Number of notices served	0	Number complied with	0

SLAUGHTER HOUSES.

Number registered	8	Number licensed	3
Number of NEW ones licensed in 1937	0		
Number of slaughter-houses inspected during 1937	7		
Number of notices served	0	Number complied with	0

MEAT REGULATIONS 1924.

Number of notices of slaughtering received	.....	.....	300
Number of notices of diseased or unsound carcasses or meat received			1
Number of slaughterings attended by M.O.H.	.....	.....	0
Number of slaughterings attended by Inspector	.....	.....	65
Number of carcasses or organs or meat found diseased or unsound			7

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient servant,

L. BODLEY SCOTT, M.D., D.P.H.

Medical Officer of Health.